

sometimes be defeated in battle. A vanquished bull would either live apart, or else play a subservient role in the herd. Whether there are look-out bulls in a herd, to warn the others against any danger confronting them, is not known. Whether cows go away to calve in secret, returning to the herd later on with the young calf, is not known. Whether the strain is becoming purer and purer either by inbreeding true or else by elimination by killing of impure offspring, this and many other things need to be learnt by close observation and study.

Since seeing the Bharatpur 'wild' cattle, I have been informed that there are several other such 'wild' herds in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh. Here, then, is an interesting field of study in several parts of India. Possibly some members of the Society or their friends may be able to throw more light on this subject. In the not too far distant future a decision may have to be made as to whether or not these 'wild' cattle of India are to receive some measure of protection (in addition to that derived from local religious sentiment) as part of the wild life heritage of the country.

DOYANG T. E.,

OATING P.O.,

ASSAM,

March 3, 1958.

E. P. GEE

5. NOTES ON THE FOURHORNED ANTELOPE *TETRACERUS QUADRICORNIS* (BLAINVILLE)

For the past four years I have kept a pair of Fourhorned Antelope *Tetracerus quadricornis* (Blainville) as pets. On several occasions they mated but had no young. Now I am happy to report that they mated on 10 July 1957 and that one fawn was born to the female on 13 March 1958. This means a gestation period of slightly over eight months, a rather long period for such a small animal. I thought this definite information concerning the gestation period of the Fourhorned Antelope might be of some scientific value; therefore, I am reporting it. Mr. S. H. Prater's *THE BOOK OF INDIAN ANIMALS* simply states: 'The rutting season is in the rains and the young are generally born about January or February.'

Prior to mating, the male and female usually go through a period of play, kneeling on their front knees facing each other, interlocking their necks and pushing each other with all their strength. Then the male struts about the female, lifting his legs in a curious drill-like

fashion as if taking some formal exercise. After these preliminaries mating takes place.

At birth the fawn weighed $2\frac{1}{4}$ pounds. It was 10 inches high at the shoulder and 15 inches in length (nose to tip of tail). The mother antelope spends several hours daily washing the fawn with her tongue.

In the Surat Dangs most of the antelope fawns are apparently born about Deepavali time (October and November). I know of eight actual records to substantiate this conclusion.

The male antelope is a very vicious pet. During the rains he ran one of his long horns through my knee-high rubber boots, pants, and flesh, penetrating clear to the bone. I was badly crippled for more than one month. It is very difficult to enter his compound.

In captivity the Fourhorned Antelopes eat wheat or other grains, grass, leaves, figs, etc. Fresh water and salt are also kept for them.

In the Surat Dangs the Fourhorned Antelope is very common, but the Muntjac or Barking Deer *Muntiacus muntjak* (Zimmerman) is very rare. The Dangis do not distinguish between the two, erroneously calling the Antelope by the Marathi name *bhekar*. These two magnificent little animals should be carefully protected.

AHWA, VIA BILIMORA,
DANGS DISTRICT, B.S.,
March 17, 1958.

E. M. SHULL

[As regards the period of gestation it is relevant to note that, though the pair of antelopes were separated immediately after mating on 10 July 1957, they were together for a short time two months later. Our correspondent writes that on this occasion the female showed 'absolutely no interest' in mating, but it would be wise to wait for confirmation of the period by further observation.

In *The Transactions of the Linnean Society of London*, Vol. xiv (iii): 522 (1825), Major-General Thomas Hardwicke describes the rutting behaviour of the Fourhorned Antelope (*Antelope chikara*) thus: 'The male in the rutting season becomes exceedingly wild and mischievous, and, although partly domesticated, continues dangerously so, running at every animal within its reach, whether deer, goat, or man. Even the feeder could only approach him on the verge of the circle to which the rope he was tied with allowed him to reach.' The General's observations were made on a pair about four years in his possession, 'within which period they bred: two young ones were produced at the same birth, one male and the other female.'—EDS.]